## Harris Survey

# *Abiding Doubts Held On JFK Assassination*

By LOUIS HARRIS

The American people have deep and abiding doubts about the official explanation of the assassination of John F. Kennedy put forth in the Warren Commission Report.

A just-completed survey of a cross section of the public reveals:

►Fewer people today than at the time of the shooting are sure that Lee Harvey Oswald killed the late President.

►A majority of the public holds the view that the full story of the assassination was not contained in the Warren Commission Report.

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►By a 3-to-2 margin the American people reject the main thrust of the Warren Report that the assassination was the work of one man and they tend to believe the killing was part of a larger plot. But the public is at a loss to say who was behind the "plot."

The largest lack of acceptance of the explanation by the Warren Commission persists among lower income, less well-educated Americans. The more articulate, better informed groups tend to give more credence to the official report.

The national cross section was asked:

**"From what you have read, do you feel the full story of the Kennedy assassination was reported in the Warren Commission Report, or do you think there are still a lot of unanswered questions about who killed President Kennedy and how it was done?"**

WARREN COMMISSION REPORT

| | Total Public Per Cent |
|---|---|
| Full story in report | 32 |
| Still may be unanswered questions | 54 |
| Not sure | 14 |

Only one in three Americans is convinced that the Warren Report contained the full story. The major reservation centers on the question of whether the assassination was the work of one man or was part of a broader plot.

Just after the killing in December, 1963, and again last month, the Harris Survey asked the public:

**"Do you feel Lee Harvey Oswald was the man who shot President Kennedy?"**

WAS OSWALD THE ASSASSIN?

| | Yes Per Cent | No Per Cent | Not Sure Per Cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nation-wide Dec., 1963 | 74 | 3 | 23 |
| Nation-wide Sept., 1966 | 69 | 3 | 28 |
| By Education | | | |
| 8th grade or less | 58 | 6 | 36 |
| High school | 70 | 3 | 27 |
| College | 75 | 2 | 23 |

A major reason why almost a third of the public cannot say for sure that Oswald killed the late President is the belief on the part of nearly one in every two Americans that the Kennedy assassination was part of a broader plot.

People were asked:

**"Do you feel that the Kennedy assassination was the work of one man or part of a broader plot?"**

ONE MAN OR BROADER PLOT

| | One Man Per Cent | Broader Plot Per Cent | Not Sure Per Cent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Nation-wide | 34 | 46 | 20 |
| By Education | | | |
| 8th grade or less | 13 | 56 | 31 |
| High school | 35 | 49 | 16 |
| College | 45 | 36 | 19 |

In order to probe deeper into this apparent doubt on the part of the public, the cross section was then asked:

**"Who or what people do you feel were behind the Kennedy assassination?"**

WHO OR WHAT BEHIND ASSASSINATION?

| | Total Public Per Cent |
|---|---|
| Just Oswald | 33 |
| Won't say | 14 |
| Communists | 11 |
| Ruby and Oswald | 8 |
| Radicals | 3 |
| Oswald and the Russians | 3 |
| Lyndon Johnson | 2 |
| Castro | 1 |
| Not sure | 29 |

The nature of the answers reveals how confused American public opinion is. Where the pursuit of facts ends and gossip and speculation begins is difficult to say.

It is possible, of course, that all the facts of the assassination are not contained in the Warren Report. Unofficial publications appear to be sowing additional doubts. It seems certain that among many of those who lived through the tragic and shocking events of Nov. 22, 1963, speculation is likely to continue for the rest of their lives.

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